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ABSTRACT

This guide, prepared by the Canadian office of Manpower and Immigration, informs secondary students of many alternative employment possibilities, and educates the students as to qualifications required. Interviews with workers in various fields of the personal services careers detail what students can expect and what is expected of them for each job. Also included in the booklet is a future outlook predicting employment trends in each fields future. (MML)

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8 CAREERS IN PERSONAL SERVICES

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CAREERS CANADA

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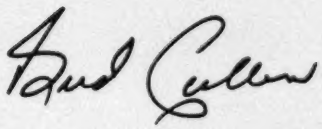
MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

All Canadians must be given the opportunity to determine their abilities, develop them through education and training, and apply their talents in a meaningful occupation. To achieve this goal, sound information must be made available to every Canadian at a stage in their development where fruitful decisions can be made. Careers – Canada is a major effort towards this end.

The benefits of the Careers – Canada series should affect many people: the student considering entrance into the world of work; the worker seeking to change occupations; the prospective immigrant; the manpower or vocational guidance counsellor, in fact, anyone wishing to match people with jobs.

Many people have been involved in the production of Careers – Canada, I join them in wishing you every success in your career search.



Bud Cullen

NOTE TO READERS

The ultimate judge of any material is the user. It is recognized that improvements can be made in the initial booklets and we ask all readers to forward any suggestions to us. The consolidation of these comments will allow us to better provide you with the type of information required.

Suggestions and comments should be addressed to:

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Occupational and Career Analysis
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Department of Manpower and Immigration,
305 Rideau Street,
OTTAWA, Ontario.
K1A 0J9

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Disponible en français sous le titre Métiers des services personnels

IS THIS FOR YOU?

The field of personal services includes people who work in a wide range of occupations yet who share a genuine interest in working with other people. Whether they are hairdressers, make-up artists or funeral directors, they work closely with others, taking care of their personal needs and making them look or feel better.

Travel attendants get to know their passengers while ensuring their comfort on long trips. In many ways they are responsible for the reputation of the companies they represent. If passengers are satisfied they are likely to travel with the same company next time.

Those in domestic services — housekeepers, butlers, and nursery attendants — get to know their employers' needs so well that they are often considered part of the family.

Funeral directors and embalmers provide a necessary service at a very difficult time in the mourners' lives. The bereaved families need help, sympathy and understanding.

People in the laundry and dry-cleaning occupations provide a necessary personal service by cleaning other people's clothes. If done efficiently, this will earn a repeat clientele.

In this booklet you will read about people who work in personal services occupations, what they do and how they feel about their work. Most of them are young people who have had a few years' experience in their chosen career.

Many have come to terms with the fact that the hours are long and irregular, but they weren't anxious to have a routine occupation in the first place. Travel attendants work on a shift basis and may work long hours for several days before having a few days off. Funeral directors should expect to be called out at any hour of the day or night. Some people in personal care services do work regular hours but often have to work evenings or Saturdays.

The majority chose their occupations because they "like to work with people" or they "like to meet people." Because, in most cases, they are dealing with clients on a very personal level, they have to be well-groomed, friendly, and able to put people at ease. Often it helps if they are good conversationalists and can talk about current events. Those in personal appearance services, such as barbers, hairdressers, estheticians and electrologists, can expect to have customers return to them only if they do their work well. Many are artistically-inclined, a useful talent in the personal appearance field.

Personal service occupations are open to both men and women. There are male hairstylists and female barbers. Careers such as rail steward and purser are now open to women, and you will find interviews in this booklet showing how women fare in them. There are a few women in funeral services too, usually as cosmetologists.

Generally a high school education is sufficient preparation to start a career in personal services. In addition, a person must be prepared to take apprenticeship programs or training programs for many of these careers.

In some parts of the country there are specific government requirements regarding age and minimum education for certain occupations. Licensing or certification is also necessary in some provinces before a person can practise.

People in these occupations need good health and stamina to stand all day, work long hours, and still keep smiling. Success in many careers depends on the reputation of the person involved. Clients will return only if the work is done competently, cheerfully and to their satisfaction.

If you like to be with people and work with people, one of these occupations could be for you. The following pages may help you decide the sort of career you want.

NATURE OF WORK

PERSONAL APPEARANCE SERVICES

Barbers

Barber-stylists are skilled workers known for their services as well as for the pleasant, friendly atmosphere of their shops.

The best known service barbers perform is cutting hair. Men, however, are more conscious these days of hairstyling, haircolouring and hair-straightening or waving services which are available in many barber shops. Barbers also shampoo hair, shave and trim beards and moustaches, give facials, hair treatments and scalp-conditioning massages. They also recommend and fit hair pieces, advise on hair problems, and suggest grooming aids and suitable hair styles.

Apart from artistic flair and skill in handling razors and scissors, barbers must enjoy working with people.

Barber shops are everywhere; in small towns, large cities, urban and suburban areas. There are large shops employing many workers, or small shops owned and operated by a single barber. Even the smallest community usually has its barber.

Patricia James, who was born and educated in Saskatchewan, has an adventurous spirit and chose to go north after graduating from a barber training program.

There were only two barber shops in the Northwest Territories' town where she settled. Until a barbering position became available Patricia worked as a waitress and clerk. Now she rents a barber shop in a local hotel.

"Business is good," Patricia says. "There are men everywhere who need haircuts — from the mines, construction, prospecting. Most of my business is from young people with longer hair styles who come in every three weeks for a trim. You meet all kinds of people. Some of them are real characters."

Patricia starts her day by tidying the shop and setting out and cleaning the equipment. Barbers generally supply their own equipment which includes combs, brushes, clippers (hand or electric), scissors and razors. They are responsible for keeping these sharpened and sterilized and their individual work areas neat and clean.

Patricia's clients generally prefer to "drop in" rather than book appointments. Her work includes shaves, shampoos, cuts and trims.

Patricia, who is still only 20, says she doesn't want the headache of owning her own shop. Her aim is to build up a larger clientele in her rented premises. However, she must have a sound knowledge of small business practices in order to purchase supplies, pay bills and keep accounts.

She loves meeting people but admits: "Sometimes it's hard to wear a continuous smile and be polite all the time."

As well as being pleasant and well-groomed, a barber must have physical stamina and good health. "The hours are long and you're on your feet all day," Patricia points out.

Many young barbers gain experience in an established shop where there are several chairs. Gilles Duval began his career this way.

Pat, who runs her own barber shop in the Northwest Territories, relieves a customer of his whiskers. She also trims beards and moustaches and shampoos and cuts hair.

Gilles was interested in barbering from an early age. "I enjoyed going to barber shops to watch them at work," he recalls. "I think what appealed most to me was the personal contact with the customers."

The minimum age for barbers varies from 15 to 18 years, depending on the province. After completing Grade nine or 10 they apprentice for 18 to 30 months or take trade-training programs at vocational or trade schools or private institutes.

Gilles completed Grade 10 and enrolled at a private barbering school in Quebec City.

"I had to take an aptitude test and I passed," he remembers. "Then I studied for 10 months at the school and got my card as an apprentice."

A blow-drier is an essential piece of barbering equipment these days as customers demand a hair "style" rather than a "short back and sides." Here Gilles, a Quebec barber-stylist, uses a blow-drier to put the final touches on a client's coiffure.

His training included practical barbering experience every day plus instruction in French, mathematics, anatomy and hairdressing.

He then apprenticed with a barber-hairstylist for three years. After receiving a certificate, he found a new position through a newspaper advertisement.

"A men's hairstylist can cut hair with a razor as well as with scissors," he points out. "He can do perms, shampooing, special hair treatments, facial massages, dyeing and beard trimming."

Gilles adds: "You must have a keen eye when you see a customer in order to quickly judge the kind of haircut that is most suitable. I'm always happy when customers come back, or to be told by a new customer that I was recommended by another of my customers. I love the contact with people."

Gilles's only disappointment is that there is not a great deal of money to be made in barber-styling. "I don't see that I'll ever be rich but I'll stay with the work because I like it."

NATURE OF WORK

Hairdressers and Unisex stylists

If you have artistic flair, enjoy meeting people and are interested in hair fashion, hairdressing and styling could be a career for you.

Hairdressers, like barbers, must put customers at ease, give quality haircuts and swift, courteous service. They keep up-to-date with new hair fashions, and must be tactful, neat and sincerely interested in and able to get along with many kinds of people.

It is only recently that women have been attracted to the field of barbering, but men have found women's hairdressing a rewarding career for years.

The impact of the fashion industry on men's hairstyling has brought barbering and hairdressing closer together in technique. Men no longer want "a short back and sides," just as women do not always want elaborate styles. So unisex salons which cater to both male and female clients are becoming popular in many cities and towns. Hairstylists may be qualified as hairdressers or as barber-stylists.

Michael never knows whether his next customer will be a man or a woman. He runs a unisex hairstyling salon in Toronto. Here he uses an electric hair-curler to style a young client's hair.

Michael Pucci, who has his own unisex salon in Ontario, suggests: "Before making any decision a person should talk with a practising hairstylist and find out what the work is really like. To do it well, you can't do it just for the money; you have to enjoy it. Hairstylists usually are more like artists. I especially like being respected as an artist by my customers."

Michael trained as a hairstylist through a two-year apprenticeship program. There are apprenticeship programs in most provinces. These usually last two or three years and may include course work at a vocational school or college. Some provinces reduce the apprenticeship period for those who have previous training or related experience. In other provinces and the territories, vocational or trade-school courses plus on-the-job training are required. Certificates of qualification are issued by hairdressers' associations or provincial governments.

Michael says there is always a demand for hairdressers. Even though he owns his own business, he still does hairstyling himself. He likes to use his talents and enjoys the work.

Many customers have regular appointments. "We only get new customers by references so it takes a couple of years to build up a business. If we move, the customers generally follow."

Michael aims to open more salons in partnership with some of the best people on his staff. "Hairstylists don't die rich but they live a good life," he says.

He has a warning for anyone contemplating either hairdressing or barbering as a career. "They should find out if they are allergic to any of the chemicals we use in the business."

Heather Pearson is just embarking on a hairdressing career. She took a two-year hairdressing course at a vocational school in her home town in Nova Scotia, having decided on her career when she was 14. "I liked trying new hairstyles on people and working with people."

After completing the course she moved to Halifax and took a practical and written test set by the provincial hairdressing association to qualify for a junior licence. She found her present position in a hotel beauty salon through a Canada Manpower Centre.

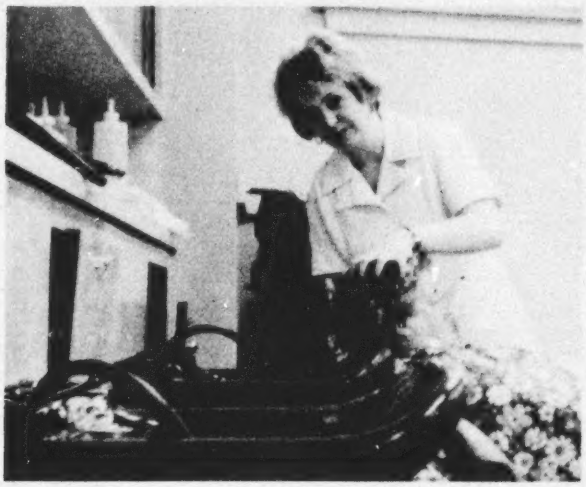
Heather's work consists mainly of shampooing and preparing the customer for the hairdresser, setting and blow-drying hair, combing out, and generally assisting the other staff in their work.

She feels that people choosing hairdressing as a career need confidence in themselves and patience with people. "You should also feel a certain loyalty to customers and not take part in gossiping."

To earn a general licence Heather must complete about six months of training. Then she plans to work towards a master's licence which will take a further three years.

Heather says, "When I receive my master's licence I hope to open my own beauty salon," an ambition she shares with many other junior and apprentice hairstylists.

Just embarking on her apprenticeship as a hairdresser, Patricia shampoos a customer's hair in readiness for the stylist's scissors. Patricia, who works in Halifax, N.S., took a two-year hairdressing course at a vocational school before qualifying for her junior licence.



Cosmetologists

"Cosmetology is no camouflage operation but rather a way of accentuating natural beauty," says Céline Cleroux who works at a Quebec beauty salon.

Céline, who is 20, graduated from Grade 12 and then took an intensive one-year course in a polyvalente high school to learn skin care, biology, make-up and manicure, fashion and the use of electrical beauty appliances.

In some provinces, there are apprenticeship training programs lasting from eight weeks (in Nova Scotia) to three years (in the Yukon). As well, there are certain registration and licensing requirements to fulfil. Other provinces have similar on-the-job training programs but these are not compulsory.

Another route for entry into the career is through courses at a private institute. Courses, which include the study of anatomy, biology, skin care, the chemistry of cosmetics and skin science may be taken full or part-time and cost about $600 for 800 hours of study. On a full-time basis, the 800-hour period would extend over 20 weeks. A graduate who wishes to specialize must take further courses in manicure, electrolysis (hair removal), specialized make-up or massage.

An esthetician's work can include manicures, pedicures, depilation, facials and cosmetic make-up. Here Céline, who works in Quebec, gives a client a facial treatment.

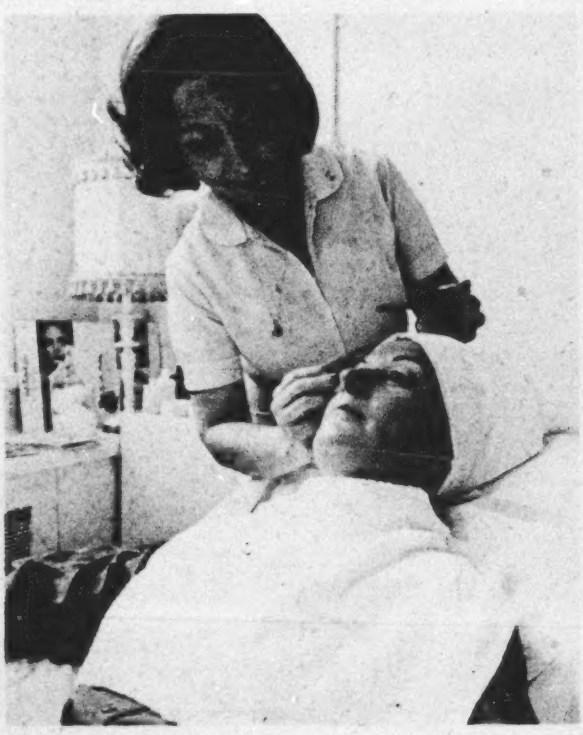
NATURE OF WORK

The minimum age requirement is generally 17 years and applicants should have a Grade 10 to 12 education. A background preparation in high school courses such as art, biology, practical chemistry, and business methods should prove helpful.

Céline suggests that to be a cosmetologist you must be resourceful, methodical, like dealing with people and have a good sense of colour. "You must learn to work fast so that customers don't have to wait."

In a typical day she may do two facial cleansings, an eyebrow depilation (removal of unwanted hair), leg depilations, advise a customer on facial make-up or give a make-up demonstration, offer advice and skin analysis to customers and sell cosmetics.

Showing clients how to make the most of their best facial characteristics is part of an esthetician's work. Here Larisa, who works at a top beauty salon in Toronto, applies eye make-up for a client. She also advises customers on skin problems and gives facial treatments.



"I love everything about my job," says Céline. "Eventually I'd like to teach cosmetology and become known so that I can give demonstrations at beauty conventions and make up models at fashion shows."

Once they have graduated, cosmetologists can choose to open their own beauty institute or work as a qualified counsellor for a large department store. They could also travel from store to store for a cosmetics company or become make-up artists.

Larisa Pavlova always had an interest in skin care and her personal appearance, and felt that she could turn this interest into a meaningful career. A Canada Manpower Centre counsellor found her a position at a beauty salon where she received the necessary training.

Larisa's work includes facial treatments, the application of make-up, consultations and advice on skin problems and make-up products. She also instructs customers in the use of make-up.

She handles five to eight clients a day and in between appointments helps out at the cosmetics sales counter.

"To do my job you have to have human understanding," Larisa says. "Many women consider their facial problems as their most personal problems. You must have the desire to help people and be very approachable."

"It's important," says Larisa, "to establish a relaxed atmosphere in the few minutes before starting treatment. What I like in particular is to see really great differences in my client when I have finished. It is as if one person came in and a new person walked out."

Make-up artists

"There's nothing routine about the work. Every face is different and every show is different. Every job is a work of art."

That's how Caroline Lam sums up her work. She was working as a hairdresser when a customer told her of an opening for a make-up artist at a television station in Toronto. She applied and was hired.

She was given basic instruction but says that even now, years later, she still has plenty to learn: "You keep learning all the time."

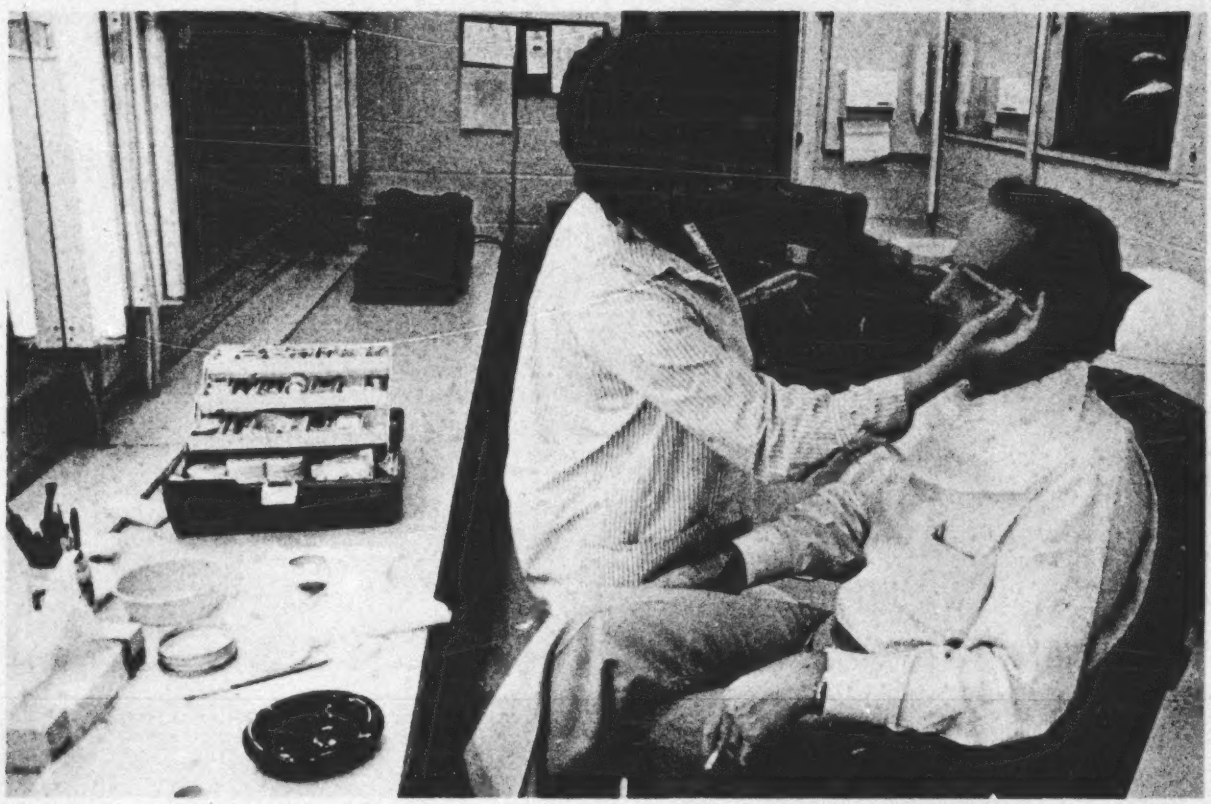
Caroline adds: "To do well you must like people and want to make them look as good as you can. A make-up person is definitely an artist. Some are better than others, of course. Some just apply the make-up but others are more like painters.

The number of people I make up in a day depends on the show and the season. In the summer it's rather slow. When the fall schedule gets going again it's pretty hectic."

The hours, she points out, are anything but regular. "Some jobs may take much longer than others if, say, you have to check the make-up job on a T.V monitor in the control room. We don't always have regularly scheduled lunch hours and coffee breaks."

Sometimes, she admits, she doesn't like the crazy hours: anywhere from before dawn to after midnight. "Before I leave I have to check to be sure I'm no longer needed. Then I clean the utensils. The make-up kits are completely portable but there are some especially compact kits for use with the mobile unit or when we have to run to one of the studios to do a correction."

Make-up is all-important to an actor or actress. Whole careers can depend on perfection in a performance, and make-up can be the finishing touch. Caroline, a make-up artist in Toronto, prepares an actor for the cameras.



NATURE OF WORK

There is no promotion as such for make-up artists, says Caroline, but if they are good they find themselves assigned to particular shows. "The performers are depending on you so it's important to do as good a job as you can."

Jenny Hudson, who runs her own make-up service in Alberta, first came into contact with make-up skills when taking part in amateur theatricals as a teenager.

Her advice to anyone interested in the field is: "Get into amateur theatre as soon as possible, and get as much education as you can. None of it will be wasted. You never know who you will be working on and it sets people at ease if you can talk on their level."

The work first appealed to her because of the close contact with people. "When you're applying make-up you are very close. Nose-to-nose, in fact," she quips.

The route she took, through amateur theatre, is a common way to enter the occupation, she says. "This way you can find out your reaction to work under pressure before you are too committed to the career. Also it's the best way to learn the basics about such things as bone structure and lighting. What you learn for stage work you can adapt for television and films."

There's no such thing as a "typical day" for a make-up artist, Jenny says. "As well as work for the T.V. station in Edmonton, I often have one of my people out of town doing work in the field."

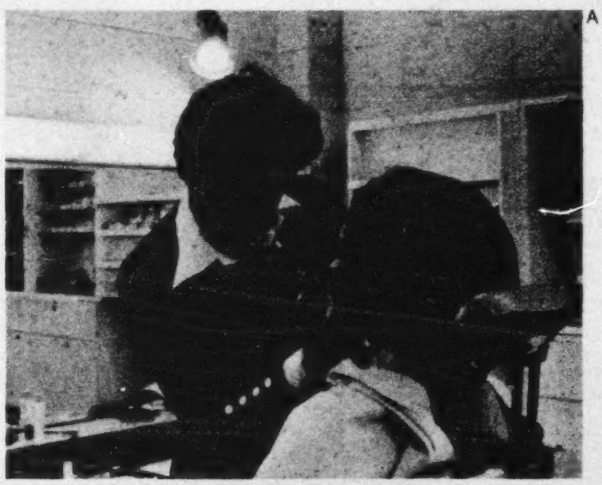
Make-up artists must be extremely patient and tactful. "You are closer to the actors and actresses than any other person," says Jenny.

Both Jenny and Caroline stress that make-up artists have to give their full concentration to the job in hand. Even between scenes they have to be ready to do touch-ups.

Jenny trains all her staff herself. There are no theatrical make-up programs available, though some make-up artists find that courses in esthetics and cosmetology are helpful. However, special techniques must be used for stage and television lighting.

The best way to get into the career, suggests one make-up artist, is to find a theatre with a good make-up person and learn on the job. "Theatres can generally use all the help they can get."

Jenny, who teaches the art of make-up as well as running her own theatrical make-up service, says the biggest thrill for her is doing a top-notch job. "For instance, taking someone who is beautiful and making her ugly for a part is a real challenge." The accompanying photographs show how a skilled artist can change a person's appearance for a television show.



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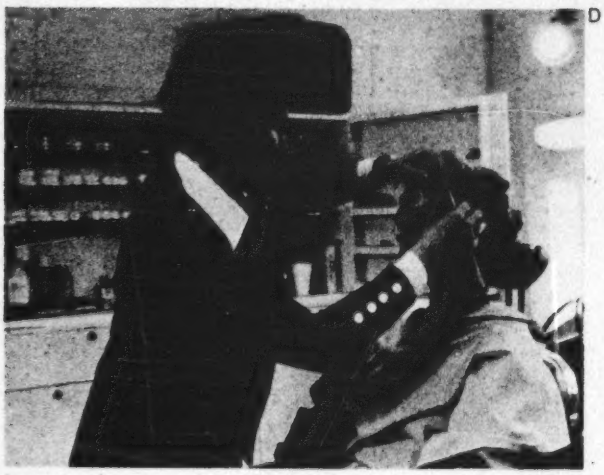

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NATURE OF WORK

Electrologists

The electrologist, who specializes in hair removal using electrical apparatus, needs tact, understanding, a liking for people and good eyesight.

"Your customer usually thinks of hair as a masculine characteristic; this is a very sensitive topic for some women," says Patricia Harris, an Ontario electrologist. "Some wait months and months before they pluck up courage to come in and see you."

Patricia says she finds the work satisfying and pleasant. "You're helping people to feel attractive. Some customers have developed self-confidence from the treatment and I've become friends with a few of my customers as a result."

Facial hair is an embarrassing problem for many women. Electrologists, who specialize in hair removal using electricity, have to have tact, understanding, a liking for people and good eyesight. Patricia, the electrologist shown here, is examining a client's skin condition before starting treatment.

To become an electrologist, a person enrolls in a program at a private institute. Applicants must usually be at least 16 or 17 years old and have a Grade 10 or 11 education. Some institutes insist that applicants take anatomy and physiology courses prior to enrollment in electrolysis (these courses could last up to six months). An electrolysis course lasts from four to seven weeks and tuition fees vary from $300 to $550.

Patricia worked as a hairdresser for several years before she decided to become an electrologist. After a four-week intensive course she started work in a beauty salon.

Electrologists usually see clients on a weekly basis as the length of treatment varies and it may take a number of treatments before the hair is completely removed. "You give a new client an hour's consultation, explaining all aspects of electrolysis," says Patricia. "I keep a case history card on each client."

Before starting work on a client, she sterilizes the instruments, a very fine needle and tweezers. She then uses alcohol to sterilize the skin area to be treated. The needle is inserted into the hair follicle, or pore, and the electricity flowing through the needle is controlled to kill the cells at the hair root. Then the needle is removed and the hair pulled out using tweezers. Good eyesight and steady hands are needed for this delicate work.

Electrologists generally have their own work cubicles and are expected to keep these tidy and their instruments clean.

Patricia says: "I'm very happy with what I'm doing. Perhaps someday I'd like to be a supervisor or do some teaching." Her only criticism is that sometimes clients are impatient and expect too much from one treatment.

Licensed masseurs/masseuses

A skilled masseur or masseuse gives body-conditioning treatments for health purposes using rubbing compounds. They also give ultraviolet, infra-red or water treatments prescribed by medical advisors, and therapeutic baths which help to ease some people's health problems.

Apprentice programs and programs at private institutions are available as training for this occupation. Some provinces have minimum age requirements and set licensing qualifications.

Esther Solloway, who works as a licensed masseuse in Toronto, says: "When people come to you feeling out of sorts or have pains and aches from rheumatism or overworking in the gym and you are able to relieve them, you get such a feeling of satisfaction."

Esther, a licensed masseuse in Toronto, massages a patient's neck muscles to relieve tension and fatigue. Esther took a one-year college course before receiving her licence and would one day like to open a specialized clinic.

She took a one-year course at a college of massage and hydrotherapy. "After a person becomes licensed there are courses given through the professional association. There are twice-a-year clinics where experts speak out on new theories of therapy."

Esther says a masseur or masseuse needs to be well-groomed, have a calm, quiet disposition, be observant, and tactful. She adds that the work is physically demanding and the average working day is from eight to ten hours.

"If you are employed in a fitness centre, you work certain hours and clients would make appointments in advance. You would keep a record of every patient and any disabilities, and whether the patient was referred by a doctor. You might also use heat lamps and the whirlpool bath, as well as, supervise the sauna and any other hydro-therapy, or water treatments."

Esther's ambition is to one day open a specialized healing clinic. "I've become very interested in the processes of healing."

NATURE OF WORK

TRAVEL ATTENDANTS

Rail steward-waiters/waitresses

Anny Davidson became a railcar steward-waitress by accident. She wanted to follow in the footsteps of a friend who had been the first woman "brakeman." Instead she was offered office jobs which she turned down. Then a railway company told her they had an opening for a steward-waiter.

"They never hired a woman for that job before and I said I'd take it. That was about a year ago. I received an exhausting, 10-day course as a steward when I started. It was excellent. I had never been a waitress before and the fact that you had to serve food on a moving train made it that much harder. I really learned a lot. I'd taken business and commerce courses in high school."

Anny particularly likes the work because no two days are the same. "This job, I think, is more fun than being a brakeman because I'm dealing with people," she says. "There's a bond or a kinship between people on the railroad; people in administration just don't know what it's like to be on the road. We sort of hang together; there is definitely a bond."

When Anny first starts her shift she checks in at the office. Then she picks up supplies from the food department and loads them onto the train. "If I'm working in the club car, I greet passengers, help load their luggage on the train, and show them to their seats. I serve them drinks and meals and later help them off and unload their luggage."

"In the cafe car I only serve hamburgers and potato chips, and in the club car we just serve beer and liquor. We don't have a regular lunch hour. We eat when we have time."

"Before I go off my shift I take inventory of my supplies and "strip the car" as we say — that is, unload it. Then we turn in all the money we've collected."

Anny says there are some heavy physical demands in the work, and that she does the same work as a man. "I've had a lot of good reactions from passengers because they are so pleased to see a woman."

She says it is important to keep smiling and keep the passengers smiling too. She admits the hours are sometimes inconvenient: "The weekends aren't really your own. You get what they call "railway weekends" — Tuesday and Wednesday."

She adds: "I'd warn anyone considering a job on a train about the irregular hours and the fact that you can be called at anytime to come to work. But if you can accept that, then you are okay."

Anny's immediate ambition is to be permanently assigned to a club car where a variety of foods and drinks are served. Promotion on the railroad is generally on the basis of seniority. "It takes a couple of years to be assigned to the club car. The step up from steward-waiter or waitress to steward on a dining car takes a lot more experience."

Serving food on a moving train is no easy matter, but Anny — a steward-waitress with a national rail company — loves the work. She says there's a kinship between people working on the railroad.

Railcar stewards

Leonard Wilson, a railcar steward, has worked on trains for 28 years and says: "I've enjoyed railroading from Day One. If you like serving the public there isn't a better occupation."

Railcar stewards usually start as steward-waiters. Promotion is generally by seniority and experience, and the waiter has to show some initiative.

Len is now in complete charge of seating passengers, supervising the dining car crew, ordering supplies and collecting money. "You're going from 6 a.m. till 10 p.m.," he says. After long runs, days off are given to make up for long hours on the job.

Sleeping accommodation is provided for staff on the train on overnight runs. The day's duties start by waking passengers and serving breakfast.

Len says it is important to like people in his line of work. "The thing I find most satisfying is the variety of people you meet — from all walks of life."

He says: "You don't need a lot of qualifications. Actually the less you know about waiting tables, the better. We train our own people. We can take people off the street and within 20 hours we can have them working competently."

Flight attendants

Travel. Meeting people. Free time in foreign lands. All these make the occupation of flight attendant a popular choice. However, it is a competitive career.

Successful applicants require intelligence, enthusiasm and the ability to smile in the face of difficulties and frustrations. A good academic or school record, and some university education is recommended. A good knowledge of geography, first aid and languages are definite assets.

Debbie Kidd, who is a flight attendant working out of Winnipeg, points out that education alone is not sufficient background. "You have to get some work experience, preferably dealing directly with the public. Part-time jobs such as clerking in a store or waiting on tables are invaluable." Debbie worked part-time as a waitress with a catering company while at school.

Another flight attendant, Doris Smithson, stresses that the best attribute is the ability to deal with people, both passengers and crew. "Even if you dislike a member of the crew you are working with, you must not let the passengers know," she says.

Airlines are interested in the hobbies and activities of applicants as well as in their education and work experience records. A history of community service or volunteer work shows that applicants think of others besides themselves.

To work for most Canadian airlines, applicants must be Canadian citizens. They must be well-groomed, have good vision (contact lenses are permitted) and preferably be bilingual. As well, airlines may have certain height, weight, and other requirements.

Applicants who are accepted undergo a four- to nine-week pre-flight training program in one of the major airport cities. The course includes airline terminology, flight routes, aviation medicine, emergency procedures, passenger-awareness training, grooming and simulated flights.

At least one training flight is given to familiarize trainees with in-flight duties such as serving meals and beverages, using the public address system and operating emergency equipment.

NATURE OF WORK

Claude Duhamel was already working for a Canadian airline in Germany when he decided to apply for in-flight service. "My main qualifications were that I spoke several languages and worked in catering when I was a student," he says.

He has been working as a flight attendant for two years now and stresses: "If you like a regular job this is not at all what you should look for. We work a maximum of 65 hours a month to get our basic salary, and can work up to 10 hours or more on overtime. On a per day basis, we may work 14 to 16 hours depending on where we fly."

Some flights have very short lay-overs — the plane may land and take off in 20 minutes. During this time the flight attendant has to re-stock the bar and load any other supplies needed.

Two-and-a-half hours prior to departure, flight attendants must call the airport to confirm the flight and any time or route changes. "You arrive an hour before departure time and read any special bulletins," says Claude. "Then you proceed to the aircraft and check the equipment before boarding the passengers. When the plane is loaded you demonstrate emergency equipment; after take-off you serve meals or drinks, talk to passengers and handle any special problems."

Languages and geographical knowledge are a great help in getting along with passengers, he says. In the first-class section, a knowledge of catering can be helpful.

"I enjoy flying to different places and meeting different people. Usually you have time to visit foreign cities and see things. I just spent two-and-a-half days in Europe on a flight."

Flights can vary considerably, he points out. "A flight to England is usually quiet because people want to sleep on the way. But a charter flight back from Cuba can be lively because people are very excited and are talking about what they have seen."

Promotion is generally by seniority. "After two years as a flight attendant, you can become a purser and after that a flight service director. In an airline company most of the advantages — the passes, the vacations, the salary — come with seniority."

He advises anyone interested in being a flight attendant to become as qualified as possible. "The competition for positions is very intense because more and more people are applying."

Ship's stewards

Ronald Johnson worked for eight months on a Maritimes' ferry as a waiter before being appointed as probably the youngest second steward in the country. He is only 25.

"I was lucky", says Ron. "You have to work as a waiter first. Then you put in a bid to be an assistant steward. From there you put in a bid to be second steward. I put in my bid when some people with more seniority didn't really want any more responsibility."

Ron, who has a Grade 10 education, was placed as a waiter aboard a ship by a Canada Manpower Centre counsellor.

"A really good thing about this job is that it's not monotonous," he says. "There's always a change and you are moving around the ship all the time. But when you dock you are really rushed. You have about 15 minutes to restock the ship, make orders end ensure there's adequate change aboard. You have to make it back to the ship before she leaves. She doesn't wait, but I've never missed her yet!"

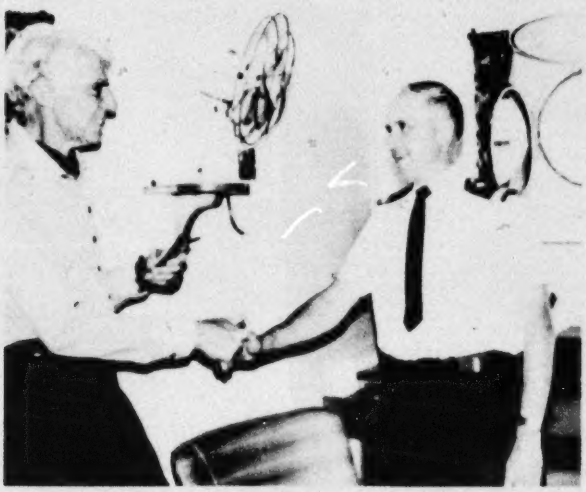
He says: "In this job you have to be an organizer, and be able to keep track of little details. You're serving the public and meeting people so you should have a good personality and be able to shoulder responsibility."

When Ron boards ship in the morning he checks that all the staff are set to go. "I keep the time records, check that there is proper equipment on board, make sure the cafeteria is stocked, order supplies and handle invoices. When the ship is moving I have to keep track of employees and take care of passenger complaints and inquiries."

Besides waiting on tables, a steward aboard ship may be responsible for cleaning the passengers' and crews' cabins, lounges, dining rooms and washrooms, changing linens and towels, making beds and berths, washing dishes, replenishing supplies and carrying baggage for passengers.

One day Ron would like to be chief steward but admits it could take years. "Seniority is all-important. However, if you have a good work record and you work hard, you can advance faster."

A ship's purser is responsible for the well-being of passengers as well as the smooth-running of the ship's administration. Roger, who works on a Quebec passenger vessel, puts a new passenger at ease.



NATURE OF WORK

Ship's pursers

Roger Rivard was born in a sailors' village in Quebec so it is not surprising that he has made his career on the ocean. He spent two years working as a ship's boy, then worked in the ship's kitchen, and went on to wait on tables aboard ship for five or six years. During that time he replaced the purser who was on vacation. Later Roger was promoted to the position.

Roger's entry into his career is fairly typical. Generally people have to work their way up to the position of purser. High-school graduation is required, and a background in bookkeeping and typing is an asset. Roger took courses in cooking and administration. One month on-the-job training is given by most shipping companies.

Because pursers must develop the ability to deal tactfully with passengers and have a strong sense of responsibility, they are usually not appointed to the position until they are at least 23 or 24 years of age. They have to work long hours and may be on call 24 hours a day while a ship is at sea.

Another way to become a purser is to start as a storeman in charge of receiving food and material. From there you can be promoted to ship's clerk and would warehouse the stores, distribute them when needed, and be responsible for reports and forms which go to the captain, chief officer and purser. The clerk's duties are similar to those of a secretary. The next step up is to ship's purser.

Roger says his work is 50 per cent administration. "I supervise every activity, including the kitchen work. I check that everybody is aboard, that everything is running well in regard to the machinery and the kitchen. I meet the storeman and the ship's clerk and tell them what they have to do. Every day I check the ship to make sure it is clean and see if there are any complaints from either the crew or the passengers.

"I contact the passengers and, when they are on a ship for the first time, try to put them at ease. I see that the laundry is done well and that the crew's uniforms are clean. I also handle first-aid. I look after the passengers' entertainment, the films, the library and any tournaments. I collect the tickets and money and deliver the mail and pay cheques to the staff."

Roger, who would eventually like to be promoted to chief purser on land, says a trip can be very long and a purser can spend many days without seeing his family and friends. "You must like the sea and not get bored easily. I work from 8 a.m. till 5 p.m., five or seven days a week, but I'm always available to satisfy people's needs. A purser must be a good organizer, a diplomat and love the public."

Apart from conducting the ship's business and looking after passengers, some pursers are expected to prepare the ship's papers for foreign ports and the ship's cargo records when discharging cargo. They prepare shipping articles and sign on the crew, supervise the stowage, care and removal of hold baggage and provide banking services.

Alec Maitland, who worked as purser for a rail company vessel out of Vancouver until recently, says his duties were widespread.

"I was responsible for balancing the ship's accounts for all areas such as newsstands, bar, cafeteria and dining room; checking the freight weigh bills; operating the ship's radio, making public announcements and handling passenger complaints. Part of the job is basically liaison between passengers and crew."

Purser Roger Rivard discusses ship's business with his captain.

Alec started working for the company in the summers while he was attending the University of Victoria. After graduating with a degree in mathematics and physics, he went to work for the company as an assistant ticket agent in Seattle.

Knowledge of the company's accounting procedures and rules and regulations helped Alec obtain the position as purser.

Much of a purser's work is observing the ship's operation to see that things are running smoothly. "The basis of the job, though, is public relations," Alec says. "You need the ability to explain things to passengers without antagonizing them. Some people are naturals at this; others just can't express themselves in a pleasing manner."

Alec now works as an auditor for the rail company and hopes to qualify as a certified public accountant by taking further studies.

Alec advises anyone interested in a purser's position that: "The job of ship's purser is becoming a thing of the past, and is gradually being amalgamated with the job of chief steward. If you want to try one of the few positions available, it is necessary to start at the bottom. By the time you reach the purser's position you understand the company fairly well in terms of accounting, ticketing and general policy."

FUNERAL SERVICES

Funeral directors

Death is a sequel to life, so throughout all time and all cultures funeral ceremonies have been conducted to honour the dead and to help those who have suffered loss to return to normal activity.

A funeral director is qualified under provincial law to take complete charge of the dead and prepare the body for burial.

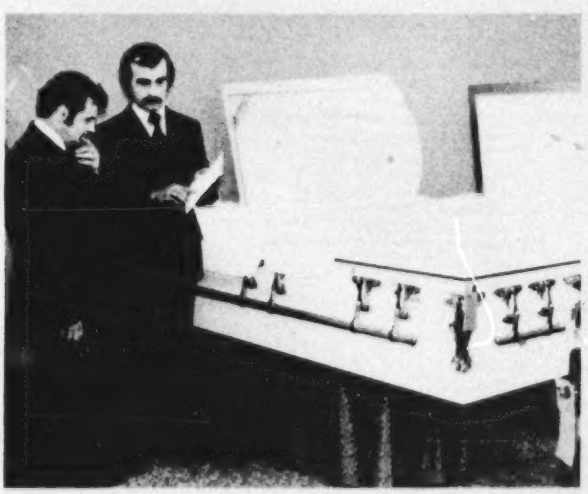
Guy Jolicoeur, a 24-year-old funeral director working in Quebec, says it was the esthetics of the work that attracted him. "When I was younger I did sculpture, modelling and painting. I was skillful with my hands."

Guy decided on his career in Grade 10, after attending an exhibition where embalming was explained. He wrote to an association of funeral directors for literature on the subject.

Some provinces require funeral directors to have a Grade 12 education and the minimum age requirement varies from 18 to 21 years.

Guy was required to complete Grade 12 with a 70 per cent average mark. After waiting a year for a vacancy, he entered a funeral institute to take a six-week course. Afterwards he apprenticed with a funeral director for two years while taking further courses.

Guy, a funeral director in Quebec, discusses prices of the different caskets with a mourner. He has to be tactful, understanding and sympathetic in his work.



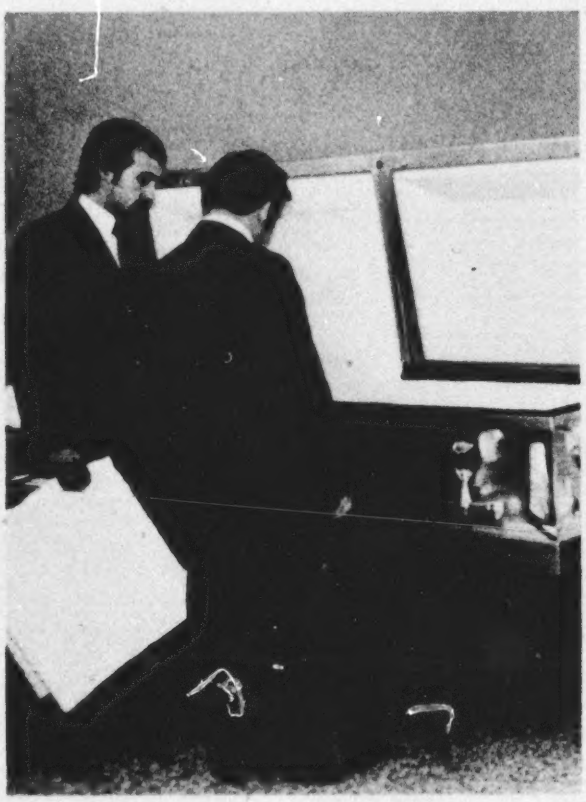
NATURE OF WORK

In some provinces the training programs are set by individual firms. Other provinces require a combination of apprenticeship and college courses totalling two to three years. Some parts of the country have licensing and certification requirements, and most funeral directors begin as embalmers.

Guy says the work is very demanding. "There are no regular schedules. You can be called upon to meet a family in the middle of the night."

As a funeral director, he coordinates the work of employees who are responsible for bringing a body to the funeral home. He helps the mourning family prepare the funeral, select a casket and burial clothes and arranges for the transportation of the mourners. He also files death certificates, obtains burial permits and prepares newspaper death notices. Guy also does the embalming operation himself. At the funeral he takes charge of arrangements to see that the ceremony runs smoothly.

Guy helps a mourner choose a casket for a relative. Guy ensures that the funeral arrangements run smoothly and gently guides the mourning family through procedures.



Probably the most necessary qualification for any person considering the career is a sensitivity to the needs of others who are emotionally upset. "You must show consideration and tact," says Guy. "You must be able to meet people and talk with them."

His immediate aim is to better his skills. "For example, I am taking a course now in cosmetology in order to achieve a better look on the face of the deceased."

The success of a funeral director depends greatly on the reputation built by the funeral home. The work requires genuine sympathy, understanding, poise and dignity, as well as emotional stability and maturity. A funeral director must also establish sound relationships with the medical profession, with local churches, hospitals, the police, cemetery associations and similar organizations.

Embalmers

Ray Dickson, an embalmer in Ontario, says: "Our work involves taking care of dead persons but what we're trying to do is make things easier for the people who are living. I got into the business because I want to get personal satisfaction out of helping people."

Ray had considered going into nursing. "I had been working in a nursing home as a nurses' aide and someone to whom I had become very close, who I had taken care of for two years, died. When I went to the funeral home he looked a lot better. It made it a lot easier on me and the family."

In most provinces high school graduation is required for entry into a career in embalming, and the minimum age requirement is usually 18 to 21 years.

Embalming is a process dating back 5,000 years. Here Ray, a Toronto embalmer, adjusts equipment in the mortuary. He once considered nursing as a career but decided on embalming instead.

Ray has been an embalmer for just over three years. "I have Grade 13 but you don't really need that much education. The funeral service business is a constant learning process because every family is different and the embalming procedure is different in each case."

Ray took a college program in funeral services before being apprenticed, but has since taken additional training.

"When I was an apprentice the hours were long and the money less than what other people my age were making. But I liked the work I was doing, and that made things easier."

Ray adds: "When you work at a funeral home you have to perform all jobs: you're the man people meet at the door, the embalmer, the clean-up staff. You have to fill in if the firm is short-staffed."

After unlocking the funeral home in the morning, he cleans, vacuums, and sets up new flower pieces. "We usually have services at 11 a.m. so everything is geared to that. We guide the family during the services because most people don't know what to do. Then we drive the cars to the cemetery and back. Afterwards there is usually more embalming to be done. At 2 p.m. there's visitation. You often miss out on lunch and have to grab supper in just a half-hour."

Embalming often involves heavy lifting, and endurance is required because of the frequent demand for irregular hours of work. Bodies must be prepared for burial by first washing them with germicidal soap. Chemicals are then injected into the bodies to preserve them.

The embalmer uses wax or similar materials to restore any damaged facial or other features which will be visible as the bodies lie in caskets. Cosmetics are used to obtain natural colouring, and the bodies are dressed and the hair and nails cared for.

Most provinces require embalmers to take an apprenticeship program or take courses from one to three years at a college or private institute. Examinations are set by the licensing bodies in most provinces, and registration is required in most parts of the country.

NATURE OF WORK

Ray says that the extra things done by the embalmer are usually the things that count most to the family. "When a family comes up and thanks you for what you've done and you know they mean it, it makes everything worthwhile."

Ray would like to manage or own a funeral home, but says that generally takes 10 to 15 years of experience. His more immediate aim could be to move up to assistant manager in his present company.

CLOTHING SERVICES

Dry cleaners

David MacDonald had already had some work experience when he decided on dry cleaning as a career.

"I worked for this firm a couple of years ago when I quit school for about a year," he says. "I went back to finish high school, then found that the person who had taught me dry cleaning was leaving, so I applied for the position. I think it's interesting work."

David was born in Fair Island, Bonavista Bay, but now works in St. John's, Newfoundland. He specializes in the cleaning and dyeing of suede and leather.

"In summer I clean about 25 to 30 coats a week. In the busy seasons, fall and winter, I clean about 50 to 75 a week. I clean and dye leather coats first because they take more time than suede. You have to find the exact shades and that's sometimes hard. Then I do the suede garments. I have to sandblast them first to take the dirt off the surface. After that I wash them, using a special process."

David admits: "I was scared at first because of the really expensive materials I had to handle. I was afraid of making mistakes."

Dry cleaners must learn how to clean by hand or machine garments, drapes and other clothes and furnishings that cannot be washed in water without damaging the fabric.

They also need to know many cleaning processes for different fabrics and colours. Articles which must be hand-cleaned are either dipped in solvent or sponged clean. Those to be machine cleaned must be weighed to avoid overloading the equipment. Waterproofing of garments must also be mastered, and operators need to know how to tend the machine to remove sludge from the filter tank and reclaim the cleaning solvent so that it can be used again.

Those wishing to make dry cleaning a career generally have to be at least 18 and have a Grade 10 education, though people with less education are sometimes accepted. Training takes from four to twelve months. In Ontario there is a two-year provincial apprenticeship program but it is not compulsory.

Some high schools offering trade training have courses in dry cleaning and pressing.

The work is physically demanding but David says the only thing he dislikes about the work is the heat, which can be tiring. "In a few years, with my experience, I could work anywhere in Canada," he says.

Launderers, Pressers, Minor repair services

Launderers may work in commercial laundry establishments, or institutions such as hospitals. It is routine heavy manual work which involves the safe and efficient operation of heavy laundry equipment used to wash linens and clothes.

The minimum age requirement is generally 16, and at least Grade eight education is preferred. The first four weeks are usually spent learning how to operate the washing machines and the care of different fabrics.

The launderer must know how to spot clean articles to remove heavy stains; brush blankets to raise and fluff nap; mix solutions such as bleach or starch and apply them to the articles, and wash delicate fabrics by hand.

Large laundries also employ staff for specific duties such as blanket-finishing, hand-washing or tending the water-extracting driers. People are also employed to operate machines which wind the damp towels or other laundry into rolls prior to ironing or packaging.

Pressers are employed to give a smooth finish to the washed articles. Again there are specific occupations such as blockers who shape knitted garments, silk and glove finishers, flatwork finishers who feed such items as sheets and towels into the ironing machine, hand pressers for delicate fabrics, and machine pressers who operate the steam machines.

Usually there is someone on staff to make minor repairs to articles such as repairing hems and linings which have been laundered or dry cleaned.

NATURE OF WORK

DOMESTIC SERVICE PERSONNEL

Full-time domestic staff usually live with a family while helping run the household.

The housekeeper surpervises cooking, cleaning, washing, ironing and may also care for the children.

The butler receives and announces guests, answers the telephone and delivers messages, sets the table and serves meals, mixes and serves beverages and sometimes performs other duties such as driving the car and supervising cooks, cleaners and other domestic staff.

A domestic housecleaner performs essentially the same duties as the housekeeper though usually under the direction of the housekeeper or employer. Housecleaners may or may not live in the house of their employer.

The nurse maid or child-care attendant cares for the children of the household, instructing them in good health and personal habits, disciplining them, organizing their recreational activities, and ensuring that they are fed, dressed and ready for school or other activities. Minor repairs to the children's clothing may also be the nurse maid's responsibility. Babysitters perform similar duties but usually on a part-time basis either at the employer's residence or in their own homes.

The companion or private nurse cares for the elderly, handicapped or convalescent person, acting as a helper or friend. Responsibilities include assistance in dressing and washing, preparing and serving meals, accompanying the employer on trips and outings, and providing entertainment by reading or playing cards. The companion or private nurse may also drive the employer's car and transact social and business affairs.

ADVANCEMENT

Personal services are generally offered by small commercial establishments and transportation companies. After taking an apprenticeship or other form of training, obtaining some years' experience and saving enough money, it is quite possible for a person to open a business in the personal appearance field. To ease the cost of setting up business and to share the workload, two or more people may form a partnership. Evening courses in business methods would be useful for anyone who wants to open a business.

Those working for large companies, perhaps in department stores or chain operations, may advance to management positions. A person who does not watch the clock, sticks with a job to the end and remains cheerful is likely to advance more quickly.

Once they are experienced, some people go on to become instructors in their particular field at colleges or possibly at high schools. In the latter case, however, a teaching certificate is normally required.

Travel attendants can advance to become supervisors, instructors or recruiting representatives. With further training or education they may advance to other departments within the company.

PREPARATION AND TRAINING

An essential qualification for any of the occupations described in this booklet is the desire to provide a service for the public. You must be outgoing and enjoy dealing with people. You can test this in school or community clubs. You must also be prepared to put some time into apprenticeship and training programs.

For those interested in the personal appearance and funeral services, some background in the arts would be useful. Those interested in make-up, electrolysis, massage or embalming would do well to have a knowledge of anatomy and human biology.

Those who aim eventually to open their own business or manage one would benefit from courses in accounting, bookkeeping and business administration. This also applies to those entering the domestic services or aspiring to a purser's position.

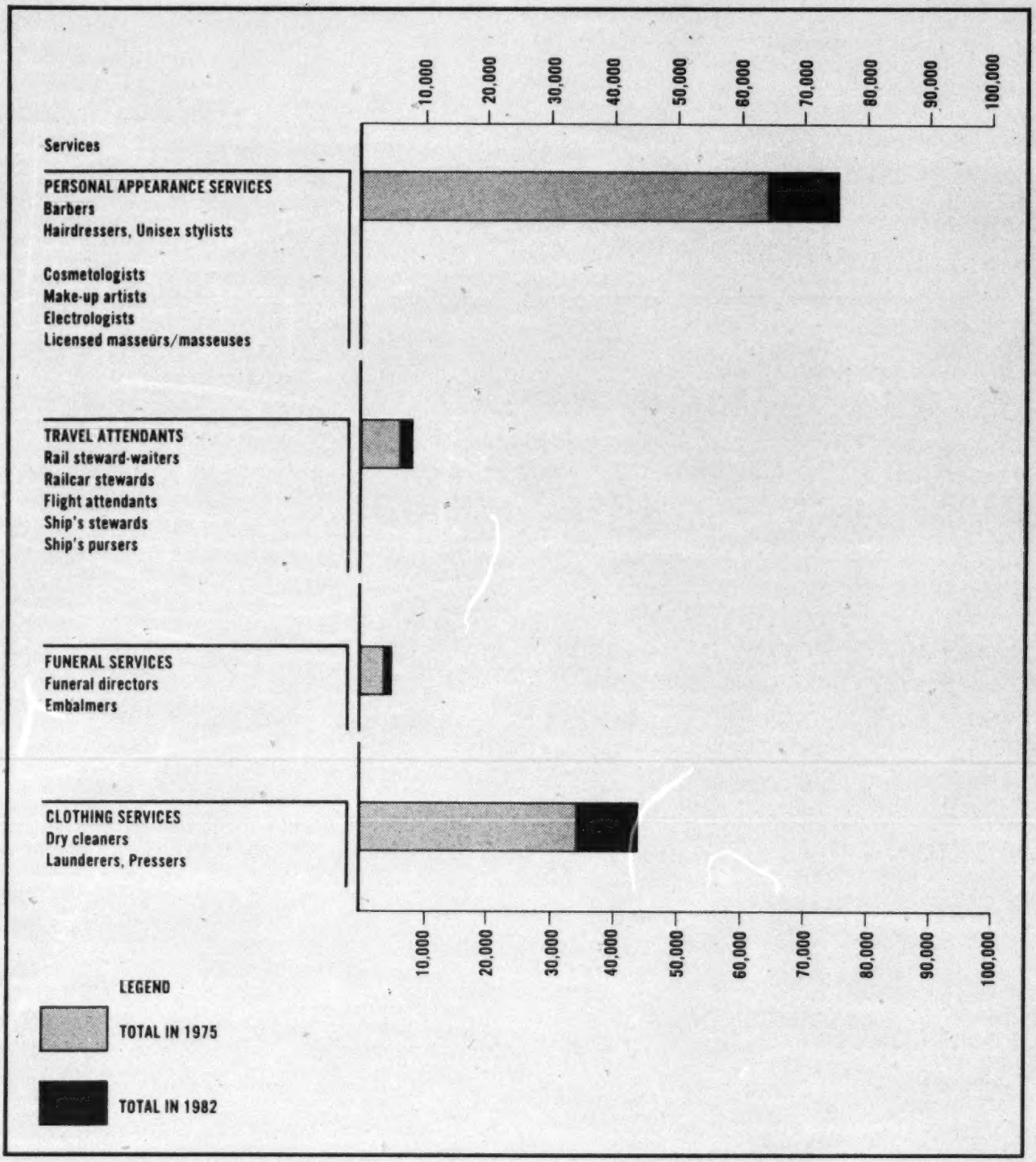
Provincial requirements regarding apprenticeship and training differ for most of the occupations described here. You should be able to find out more about the specific career you are interested in by asking at a school guidance office, a Canada Manpower Centre or by writing to local institutions or employers for specific advice.

Some high schools and community colleges offer courses in personal care services, dry cleaning and laundering. Those interested in clothing and domestic services would do well to take high school courses in textiles, general science and chemistry.

Cosmetology, massage and electrolysis are generally taught at private institutes. Fees range from $300 to $1,000. Often the reputation of the institute has a lot to do with the success of a graduate in a chosen career, so students should choose carefully. Possible places of employment should be visited to determine if the programs and the institute have a good reputation in the industry.

Travel attendants are generally trained by the rail, air or shipping company employing them. Courses last up to nine weeks. Preference is given to prospective flight attendants who have two years of college, or some business experience, especially in public contact work.

FUTURE OUTLOOK



FUTURE OUTLOOK

If you are interested in any of the careers outlined in this booklet, you should make sure you meet all the qualifications for entry. Competition for many occupations is likely to be keen in the years to come.

In 1975 there were approximately 200,000 people employed in these occupations. By 1982 there will be approximately 224,000, an increase of about 12 per cent. However, the average growth in the number of people in all occupations over the same period is expected to be between 14 and 21 per cent. As the growth of these occupations is only just under the margin of the average expected growth in the labour force, the number of job opportunities is not expected to increase significantly. However, there is a high turn-over which means there will be many openings as positions become vacant.

The growth in demand for staff in the personal appearance services and in the travel field is likely to be a little below the average for Canadian occupations generally. But more personnel will be needed in funeral services and the laundering business.

The "Future Outlook" chart shows how many people worked in these groups of occupations in 1975 and how many are expected to be working in them in 1982.

Generally the demand in all personal service careers will be for reliable, well-qualified staff with a genuine desire to give good service to others.

WHAT'S THE NEXT STEP?

If you have read through this booklet and seen one or more careers which interest you, don't stop there. To make the right choice you need all the advice you can get.

Probably the best way to start is to have a talk with a professional guidance counsellor, either in a Canada Manpower Centre or in a high school. Your nearest Canada Manpower Center has a staff of counsellors who will be able to tell you more about the employment possibilities in your area, or elsewhere. They will also be able to give you apprenticeship and training requirements for specific occupations; these differ from province to province.

Canada Manpower Centres also have a course that might help you — The Creative Job Search Technique (CJST). This course explains the basics of getting work as well as how to present yourself to future employers. You would be shown how to write a résumé (a list of your qualifications and experience) and letter of application, how to fill out applications, and how to conduct yourself during interviews.

Then you could seek advice from people working locally in these occupations or write for details of courses given by colleges and institutions. If you plan to take a training course you should write to several institutions to compare the content and length of the courses and tuition fees.

The best way to decide on a career is to ask questions. That way you will hear about the good things and the bad and have as complete a picture as possible before you make the big decision. Ask questions of yourself — do I really like helping people? Do I mind irregular hours if the work is interesting? Am I prepared to spend time, perhaps several years, apprenticing? Would I prefer to work in a big establishment or a small one?

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

Before making that career choice, you should spend as long as possible looking into many career areas. Other "Careers Canada" booklets are being prepared in this series and, if you are interested in some of the occupations described in "Personal Services," you may also be interested in booklets describing careers in related fields.

You probably read through this booklet because you were interested in working with people. You may find the Careers Canada booklet on occupations in the hospitality industry of interest; it describes other occupations where you meet people and serve the public.

If you want specific information about a particular career mentioned in this booklet, ask at you local Canada Manpower Centre or school guidance office about Careers Provinces leaflets. These leaflets have been prepared to accompany Careers Canada booklets and give specific information regarding entry requirements, training, apprenticeships, salary scales and working conditions for each occupation in each province.